Exodus

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Exodus

by orphan_account

Summary

The Ripper has been revealed but he has escaped and is on the run. Will and Jack are hunting him. Their search leads them to yet more brutal killings but is Hannibal the culprit or is this a whole different type of killer? Will might just find himself in over his head... but who will come to his rescue?

Notes

Based on this prompt from the HannibalKinkMeme:

"Will is captured by one of the killers he's tracking down (easiest probably to place this during Fromage, but anyone from the show or an OMC is fine.) He's drugged, injured, sleep/food/water-deprived or otherwise a bit out of it, when his captor rapes him. To escape the trauma of the event, Will dissociates and imagines the event from his captor's viewpoint, just as he normally does during his cases. It's easier for him to imagine himself as the assailant who's in control then to come to terms with what's actually happening. His empathy leads him to experience the sexual pleasure that his attacker is feeling.

When Will's rapist sees that his victim has gone limp and is becoming physically aroused, he could react by becoming more violent with him, verbally degrading him for "enjoying it," taking advantage of Will's new compliance, losing interest because Will isn't reacting with terror like he wanted, or really anything else you could think of, as long as he notices that Will is getting off to it."

Chapter 1

Will shivered; staring at the smashed up Ford Mustang before him. He swallowed hard, trying to compose himself.

He knew exactly what was to be expected of him.

He and Jack had arrived in this place, a small, secluded town South of Texas, that afternoon. This was just another chapter in their manhunt for Doctor Hannibal Lecter. The killer had fled his home ten weeks previously, and Jack, of course, was leading the hunt to find him. Even more unsurprisingly, it was Will that Jack had asked to join him on the hunt. If anyone could track down Hannibal Lecter, it was Will Graham.

They had received word of a spate of brutal killings over a relatively small area. In fact, three people had gone missing in that very town in the last month.

Even more intriguingly, there had been rumours, though groundless, that Lecter had been seen in that State. Not just the State, but in that very area, in the last few weeks.

It wasn't much to go on, but it was something.

So, Jack and Will had flown to the Deep South, contacting the local police force for assistance. Hannibal or not, this was still a killer that needed to be caught.

As soon as they had entered that town, Will had felt close to Lecter, and had informed Jack that he was sure that they were getting nearer. That these killings could be down to their Cannibal. Jack hadn't been sure, believing this to be another false dawn, that there were too many differences in the crime to be the work of the Ripper. Will had told him that he could only go by what he felt, and he felt that Lecter was near. Jack had listened to him, as ever unable to refuse his young friend. There had been a time when Jack didn't listen to Will, when the profiler had needed him more than ever, and Jack had let him down. He always listened to him now, no matter how much he may disagree with him. He always gave Will a chance.

It was Will's gut instincts that had led them to this town.

As usual, those instincts hadn't let them down.

A boy had been discovered in an abandoned car out in the woods, on the outskirts of the small town. It was as if someone had known they were coming, as the body was found only an hour after they had arrived there. It had been the third similar killing in a month. These killings had all been the same, the victims had been raped, had their throats cut, and then, and this was the especially interesting part, had had their eyes, tongues and hearts removed.

Jack had, excitedly, pointed out the similarities to Lecter's Ripper killings.

Will leaned into the car, looking at the dead naked man before him.

He prepared himself. Strangers were close by, watching him, whispering. He wanted privacy as he did this but he wasn't going to get it. Best to just get on with it because then, the quicker it would be over.

He took a deep breath. And closed his eyes.

And he looked. And lost himself.

I am here.

I am higher than the rest of you.

They look up to me, while I look down. All will look up to me.

They see me through the eyes of the damned.

I didn't kill him here. I brought him here, once I had saved him. I returned him to his car, so he could be found. My blessings are complete.

I am justice, I am beyond this realm, beyond the judgement of these lesser mortals. Only the great caretaker can judge me. I have been sent here to find them, to save them, to set them free. The listeners are with me, beside me, we move as one. We are so much more than the ants, the insects. The deluded who are unaware of the demons in their midst. I take them, I use them, I cleanse them. They are mine to own, mine to control. Once their bodies are purged of the evil, and the souls have been released from the darkness, I do them the ultimate honour. I raise them up, I free them from their shame. We devour them in every way, to remove any trace of the evil that resided. We consume their goodness, we mix it with our own.

My congregation share in my strength. Together, we are stronger.

I am God's servant. I will hunt them down. I will release the innocent and destroy the wicked.

This is my task. This is my purpose.

This is my design.

Will's eyes snapped open. He stumbled slightly, and was relieved to feel Jack's hand on his back, steadying him. He took three deep breaths, trying to control the panic coursing through him.

It never got easier.

Jack watched him, giving him the moment he needed.

Finally, he asked. “Is it him?”

“I don't think so.” Will replied, covering his face with his hands, removing his glasses to rub as his eyes.

Jack frowned. “You sure? There are some similarities with the last body we found to the last known victims of-”

Will sighed, irritated. “It's not him, Jack.” He gestured at the body. “This isn't about humiliating or mocking the victims, or us, for that matter. This is something altogether different. This man think he's doing God's work, he believes he's been put on this Earth to save others.” He threw Jack a withering look. “Does that sound like Doctor Lecter to you?”

Jack nodded, resigned to accepting Will's word, though he couldn't hide his disappointment. Will understood. This one had felt close, it had felt right. And since they had arrived in the town, Will had been sure that he could *feel* that Lecter was close by. He couldn't even explain it. It was just there, deep down, in his gut.

And it wasn't just the “Cannibal” radar Will seemed to have had since Lecter had vanished. There was also the nagging suspicion that he was being watched. Wherever he went, he could feel those cold eyes on him, assessing him, watching his every move.

If Will was honest with himself, and this was what truly scared him, he wanted Lecter to find him. Whether that was to kill the other man, or trap him and bring him to justice, Will couldn't say. Maybe he just wanted to *see* him again. To show the doctor that Will was free now, that the tables had turned.

'If they really had...'

“Will?”

Will was startled out of his musings and he looked round, meeting Jack's concerned gaze.

“You okay?”

The profiler nodded. “I'm fine. I was just thinking.”

Jack clearly wasn't satisfied, but he trusted Will enough to go along with him.

'How times had changed.'

Will couldn't ignore the bitterness coursing through him. He pushed it to one side. The past was the past. Going back there, letting those dark days back in, wouldn't help him now. He needed to stay focused.

“What else can you tell me about this guy?”

Will grimaced. “He doesn't work alone.”

Jack blinked. “He has a team?”

“More like a flock.”

“You mean like a preacher?”

“Yeah, something like that. He moves around, his people go with him. They are looking for a particular breed of victim. Man or women, boy or girl, black or white, rich or poor.” Will ran a shaky hand through his hair. “It doesn't matter to this guy. They find their target, they grab them, and then they cleanse them-”

“How do you mean, cleanse?” Jack prompted.

“I'm not sure,” Will told him. “But he wants to bring them to God somehow.”

“That's why he rapes them? Kills and eats them?”

“He's only eating the parts that are bad.”

“The heart, the tongue, and the eyes?”

“Exactly. He thinks that there's something wrong with the victim, something he needs to correct, and that's what he's doing.” Will shook his head. “He thinks he's doing them a favour. And his flock love him for it.” He closed his eyes. “That's about all I can tell you, Jack.”

Jack nodded. “Okay, Will. I think that's all we're gonna get tonight.” He turned around, gesturing for the local police to take over the crime scene. He put his arm around Will's shoulders. “Good job. We'll take another look at the body tomorrow. See what else you can get then.”

He waved to a waiting patrol car, parked close by, preventing the public from getting too close.

The uniformed officer opened his door, climbed out, and approached Jack and Will. He looked barely older than a teenager, with a boyish face and untidy blond hair.

“Yes, Sir?”

“We're done here,” Jack said. “Could you run Agent Graham back to the motel for me, please?”

The officer nodded, and then took a double take once he had taken a proper look at Will.

“You're Will Graham!” He exclaimed. Will nodded politely in response, and then looked away.

“You're hunting for “Hannibal the Cannibal!” You were on the news. He framed you for those murders, sent you to-”

Will wanted the ground to swallow him up.

'Plunge a knife into his gut, Will. Silence his inconsiderate tongue.'

Will shuddered, slamming a hand into the side of his head. Ignoring the confused glances from the officer, Will looked towards Jack for help.

Those thoughts. *That voice.*

When would he be free?

Jack took hold of the officer's arm. “Maybe you'd better wait for Agent Graham by the car, Lieutenant. And maybe gain some tact while you're waiting?”

The officer's smile faded. “Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't mean-”

“I told you,” Jack said, patience long gone. “Wait by the car.”

The officer paused, and then nodded. “Sure.” He then hurried back over to the car, not able to hide his continued interest in the “celebrity” before him.

“Sorry about that. He's a new recruit,” Jack noted, softly. “Seemed to be excited to meet you though.”

Will bit his lip. “Great.”

Jack glanced at him. “We're getting closer to this one, Will.”

Will shrugged. “We're no closer to *him*, Jack.”

“We'll find him.”

“We don't know that.”

“I have faith.”

Will actually laughed. How nice it must be to believe in something, or someone. Will couldn't do that, not any more. He would never trust any one again, never put himself in such a weak position. He couldn't.

“It's getting late,” Jack informed him, glancing at his watch. “We need to get back to the motel, should both try and get some sleep...”

Will rolled his eyes.

Jack saw, and he frowned. “When was the last time you actually slept, Will? You know what Alana would say-”

Will chuckled humourlessly. “To even try to sleep Jack, I would actually have to close my eyes.” He looked up at Jack, his pain suddenly on display. When he spoke again, his words came out so quietly, Jack had to strain to hear him. “Problem is, every single time I close my eyes, I see him.”

Unable to see the pity, and the guilt, in Jack's hurt expression, Will stared in the opposite direction, out into the woods.

He suddenly shivered. There it was again. The feeling that someone was out there. Someone getting closer. Someone watching...

Jack was standing beside him, glaring out into the blackness. “Is there anything I can do?”

Will smiled. It was not a nice smile. “No Jack. No one can help me.”

Jack let out a heavy sigh, and then placed his hand on Will's shoulder.

Will flinched. A memory stirred...

...A warm room. A neat and tidy office. The window, and the darkness beyond. The darkness in the room with him. His controlling grip on his shoulder...

Will shook Jack's hand away from him, and then glanced down.

Jack eyed him, obviously uncertain at what he should do to try to comfort his friend. There was still so much unsaid between them, so much bad blood. Jack didn't know what to do for the best.

He had accused Will of murder. He had believed *Hannibal Lecter* over his own protégée. Just how was he supposed to make amends for that?

“Rest up.” He whispered, as gently as he could. “We'll get back on this tomorrow. We'll find whoever this is and cross another one of the list. And then we can get back on the hunt. We're doing good work here, Will.”

“I know that, Jack.”

Jack gave him a small smile. “Sleep well.”

Will gritted his teeth. He set off then, walking steadily up to the officer who was leaning against his car door, his arms crossed over his chest. As Will drew nearer, the officer extended his hand toward him.

“Sorry about that,” he said softly. “We don't see many famous people in these parts.”

“That's cool,” Will replied, shaking the hand the man offered to him. “But I'm not famous, okay?”

The officer nodded, and then gestured to Will to get into the passenger seat. Before Will did so, he asked: “What's your name, Lieutenant?”

The other man smiled. “Joe, Sir. Joe Naughton.”

Will returned the smile, and then got into the car. As he watched Naughton start the engine, he wondered just what kind of a hellish trip he was letting himself in for...

XXX

The twenty minute car journey back to his motel was, strangely, a lot more enjoyable than Will had expected. Joe turned out to be quite a charming young man who, as it happened, had only been in the force for a few months. He had followed his “Pop's” career path, and had simply been very excited to meet someone as “heroic” as Will Graham.

Will had laughed at that. He'd told Joe that he'd got the wrong man. There was nothing heroic about fighting for survival.

Joe had disagreed with him, informing Will that most men would have just “given up.”

Will had said nothing to that.

His thoughts, though, they'd had plenty to say.

'You see, my friend? You see what you are truly worth? Even this boy can see your true potential. When will you, dear Will?'

Once they had arrived at the motel, and Will had said his goodbyes to the young officer, Will made his way into his room. He took off his jacket and tossed it onto the bed. His gun and cell phone followed quickly after. He wondered if Jack was still at the crime scene. His conversation with Joe had been a lot of help to him and he now felt bad about the way he had been with Jack that night. He knew Jack wouldn't blame him, that his boss was only too aware what it took for Will to “look” after what had happened. But that didn't make it okay.

Will didn't blame Jack. He knew only to well how easy it was to believe every word that Hannibal Lecter had ever said to him.

As soon as he heard Jack arrive back, he would go and talk to him. Clear the air, so they could be ready to get this case solved as quickly as possible.

Will was so caught up in his thoughts that he never heard the door opening behind him.

He never heard the footsteps creeping up behind him.

When the blunt instrument connected with the back of his head, with enough force to send him flying forward, Will only had time to register the pain before the blackness surrounded him, and he had no choice but to give into it completely.

He had been knocked out cold.

“Sorry about that, Will. He wants to meet you.”

Joe stood over the unconscious man, dropping the wood he had used to strike the unsuspecting Will down.

As he reached for him, he smiled fondly.

“Don't worry though. You're gonna be just fine.”

TBC

Chapter 2

When Will came to, he blinked his eyes, straining, as he tried to focus. He squinted from the ferocity of the bright light he suddenly found himself in. His head throbbing, he first tried to ascertain where he was. Where had he last been? His motel room... There had been pain. He'd been attacked. And then, he'd clearly been moved.

He tried to raise his hand and found that he couldn't. It took him two more seconds to figure out that he was tightly tied to a beam behind him. As his eyes grew accustomed to the light, he saw that he was in a small, bare room. It seemed to be a barn, or a shack.

He blinked some more. There were no windows in this shack. The light wasn't sunlight, it was probably still dark. He assumed he hadn't been out for too long. Surely Jack was looking for him?

If he knew that he was missing...

'Oh God'

As far as Jack was concerned, Will was tucked up, safe and sound, in his motel room. His disappearance wouldn't even be noticed until the morning.

No one was coming to look for him...

Will gave himself a small shake. Losing control was not an option, not now. If no one was coming, then he'd have to help himself. Not for the first time, either. So, he tried to focus. Where the hell was he? Why was he so cold? Noting that he wasn't wearing his glasses, he frowned. His eyesight was poor at the best of times. No wonder his head was killing him...

He had a sudden flashback to a unexpected, crippling pain on the back of his head and he winced at the memory. So, he'd been struck from behind, and brought to wherever this place was. He shivered, biting his lip as it started to dawn on him why he was feeling so cold. Glancing down, dread filled him when he discovered that he was naked apart from a gown that had been wrapped around him. He wasn't even wearing his boxers. Whoever had brought him to this place had also stripped him. The thought made him want to vomit. Swallowing the bile down hard, he tugged against the bonds restraining him but couldn't even loosen the knots.

He was completely helpless.

Will let out a low sob as he attempted, unsuccessfully, to calm himself down. He was terrified but knew he had to hide it. He had been in his hotel room, alone. He hadn't sensed any danger. Just who had taken him, and why? There had been no sound, no pre-warning. He'd felt a flash of searing pain and then – nothing.

Pitch blackness.

And he'd known nothing more, until he'd woken up into that painful light.

Who would do this to him? Why?

A silent voice whispered in his ear.

'You know who.'

Will closed his eyes tightly, trying to control the panic threatening to grip him. This didn't feel like a game Hannibal Lecter would play. When he had "looked" into this most recent killer's mind, he hadn't felt the familiarity of Lecter. This man had been something entirely new, something different. Where Lecter was arrogant, meticulous and controlled in his killings, making them into an art form, this new killer was passionate, vindictive and almost animistic in his work. This was a man who was committing these murders out of some strange belief that he was doing what needed to be done. The men and women he had killed had had something damningly wrong with them, according to the killer. Something he needed to cleanse. And he was the only one who could do it.

A holy mission, it could be said.

And that was a million miles away from Doctor Hannibal Lecter.

And all this came back to one question for Will.

What did the killer want with *him?*

He trembled; he was so cold. And he was scared. He knew panicking was the worst thing he could do. Whoever brought him there hadn't killed him, and considering the state of his previous victims, this was a very good sign. Maybe, then, Will could reason with the man.

He composed himself, and then called out, to the empty room:

"Hello? Is there anyone there?"

He waited for a few seconds, pulling against the ropes holding him, twitching nervously.

He was greeted with silence.

He tried again.

"Hey! Talk to me! Can anyone hear me?"

Still nothing.

He gritted his teeth. Why was no one answering him?

Fear getting the better of him, Will screaming into the silence:

"WHAT DO YOU FUCKING WANT?"

Suddenly, he heard the sound of a key being turned in a lock, and the door opposite him was slowly creaking open. He breathed hard, trying to remain calm, but failing. He found himself leaning back into the wall behind him, attempting to actually mould into it. Anything to help him disappear.

As he watched, two figures entered the room and walked towards him, side by side. They were both dressed in long, black robes and the hoods draped down made it impossible to see their faces. Will glared at them, wondering what horror movie he'd accidentally stumbled into.

“Who are you?” He muttered, his voice sounding strange even to him. “What do you want?”

They didn't react to his questions. They continued to move across the room slowly, their heads bowed. When they reached him, he tried to shrink away from them but there was no where for him to go.

Will's eyes widened when one of them pulled out a sharp, shiny knife. He began to struggle in earnest but he knew he couldn't get free. The two men still didn't speak to him, they didn't acknowledge him at all. Just as Will prepared himself for the slash of the knife, and the end of his life, he suddenly found himself free of his bonds. He gasped in surprise, and then the men took hold of his arms and began to pull him away from the beam he was no longer attached to.

“What is this?” Will whispered, as he was dragged forward. “What the hell do you people want with me?”

When they continued to ignore him, Will suddenly felt a surge of anger. He began to fight furiously. “Talk to me!” He shouted. “Are you fucking deaf?”

The vicious blow to his head abruptly put an end to his resistance. Will's head whipped round at the force of the blow, adding to his existing head ache, and he groaned as he was manhandled to the door.

He took the hint, and didn't try to speak to them again.

Will let his two “guides” take him outside into the night air, and the freezing temperature cut him to his bones. He whimpered, the thin gown he was dressed in offering him no protection from the cold. He stumbled between them, grimacing as his bare feet were made to tread on the painful, muddy ground. They were walking through woodland. Will wondered if they were far from where the latest victim was found. He walked as he was directed, doing as he was told. He knew any further attempts to get free would only result in more rough treatment for him though, so Will stayed quiet and compliant, letting them take him to whatever they intended his fate to be.

That pit of dread in his stomach increased when he saw what he could only describe as a makeshift anti-church before him. It was a tiny building, simple and wooden, just like the barn where he had regained consciousness, though slightly larger. This was, like the robes his handlers were wearing, simply an impression of the worst of nightmares.

'*Someone else's nightmares,*' Will corrected himself, managing a grim smile as they approached the entrance to the "church". '*This is a normal night's sleep for me.*'

Only, this wasn't a nightmare. He was wide awake. And this time, his living hell wasn't down to Hannibal Lecter, and that somehow terrified him even more.

This monster in the dark was *new.*

He grimaced as they arrived at the building, and Will tried to push aside his terror, as the man to his right shoved open the large door. It swung open, and as Will looked, he saw that he had been correct. It was a church. And it seemed like the congregation were all there, waiting inside just for him.

They all turned as one to look at him. There were about twenty men and women, all colours, creeds and ages. Their cold stares and eerie silence only served to unnerve Will all the more.

There was a rustle of movement beside him, and Will glanced to his left. His breath caught in his throat at what he saw. The two men that had come to the shack for him had removed their hoods, and one of them was only too familiar to the horrified Will.

"Joe?" He whispered, shaking his head in disbelief. "What the hell are you doing?"

Joe gave him a gentle smile. "You have nothing to fear from us, Will. We only want to help you."

He took hold of Will and then, with a grimace from the other man, used ropes to tie Will's hands once more behind his back, making him defenceless again.

"We know it's not your fault." Joe hissed to him, still standing behind him. "You need to be cleansed."

Cleansed.

Will couldn't help it. He struggled. He could not just stand by and let them do whatever they planned.

A new voice filled the room.

"Bring him closer."

There was a quiet murmuring, and then every voice fell silent once more. They all turned as one to look at him. Will attempted to ignore all of the dispassionate looks of the people lined up either side and instead gazed past them, staring at the figure at the far end of the room. The person, dressed in the same black robes as Joe, but still wearing a hood to keep his face hidden, beckoned for Will to come closer. Before the profiler had any chance to even compute what was happening, he was being forced forward by Joe. He quickly found himself standing right in front of the man he assumed was the head of the "Church". Whatever sordid version of religion this was.

The man enigmatically lowered his hood, and Will glared into the face of the killer he had been searching for.

He was older, perhaps in his fifties. His hair was long and unkempt, his face stern and cold. His eyes were what terrified Will the most. They were like two black orbs, dark and unforgiving.

There was no emotion there.

Will was in very serious trouble.

The leader held up his hand, as if he wanted quiet. He needn't have bothered, the place was deadly silent.

And the tension was palpable.

“Brothers and sisters,” he announced, his voice clear and booming, as he addressed his attentive audience. “We come together under the full moon once again, and we bring strength to each other, and the task we must perform. I honour you all.”

“Amen!” They cried, in response.

The Leader bowed his head to his flock, and then focused his attention solely on Will. He smiled at him and something other than terror then seized Will. Something that took his breath away even more. There was something different about that smile.

Something *predatory.*

Will couldn't help but flinch involuntarily as the man reached out and cupped his cheek, as he called out, in the same passionate tones: “We have come together on this night for one purpose.” He stopped touching Will, and stepped forward, both arms raised. “A purpose most holy. We will save this soul from damnation.”

At that, the room was suddenly filled with cheers and shrieks of delight.

Their cries of worship that greeted his words chilled Will to his core.

“*Praise you! God be with us! Thank you, Lord!*”

Will glanced over his shoulder, wanting to make eye contact with somebody, to see something he could describe as pity or mercy, but he was quickly grabbed by Joe and forced to look at the leader once more.

“Friend, we welcome you. I am Rephael,” the man told him. “And I know what you need.”

Will's took a step back. But he had no where to go but back into Joe's grip.

Like a wounded animal being taunted by it's prey, he was trapped.

“What do you mean?” Will managed to ask, his voice soft and strained. “What I need?”

Rephael took hold of his shoulder and squeezed it.

“I will cast out the evil inside of you, my son.”

When Will spoke next, the words came out as nothing but a croak. “Cast out?”

A look came across Rephael 's face then, something very dark and cruel.

“We know what you are.”

Will gazed up at him with horrified eyes.

“What *exactly* do you think I am?”

Rephael smiled serenely at him. He leaned right into Will, and whispered, almost seductively, into his ear.

“*Witch.*”

Will's blood turned to ice in his veins.

Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

> I hope someone out there is enjoying this... it's definitely one of the quickest stories I've written. If someone could let me know I'm doing okay, that would be nice... :)

Will took a deep breath, trying to control his ever growing fears. “I need you all to listen to me,” he managed, speaking as calmly as he could. “You're making a terrible mistake...”

Rephael raised a hand. “You will be silent...”

“I'm not a witch, I'm an FBI agent and-”

Rephael raised an eyebrow, and chuckled. He took hold of Will's arms painfully, cutting him off, and looked intensely into his face. “I will enjoy cutting out your lying tongue, witch.”

Will flinched. The leader smiled, and then turned his attention to Joe.

“Bring me the alter please, Joe.” He smiled. “It's time.”

With a quick reply of “Yes, Pops,” Joe rushed to obey. Will stared after him. Of course, it made sense. Joe had mentioned his Father already that night, and how he had “followed” his Dad's course. He'd obviously meant more than just following him into the force. Will couldn't help himself, he had to try again. He had to try to make these people understand.

“You've already murdered at least six innocent people,” Will said, trying to push Rephael away from him. “You have to stop this-”

At that, Rephael laughed. He turned to his followers, all gazing up at him in adoration.

“You hear him, my friends? You hear his wicked lies? He wants you to believe that we murdered the very souls we have saved!”

They shouted out in response, yelling abuse at him, and support for Rephael's words.

Rephael smirked. “You may as well give up now, witch. We know what you are. We know how the poor soul you have possessed is suffering.” He struck Will hard across the face with the back of his hand. “And we will stop you.”

At that moment, Joe re-appeared from the back of the “Church” dragging what Will assumed was the “alter” Rephael had mentioned. It was a wooden table and had been decorated in crucifix and other holy relics. It was placed before Rephael, who knelt down in front of it. Joe

had meanwhile returned to Will's side. Glancing over his shoulder, Will saw that the rest of the congregation had followed Rephael's example, and were all kneeling.

Will was trembling. He knew he didn't have long left. He had to try one last time. “I'm a profiler with the FBI,” he whispered, his eyes locked on Joe's. “I have an ability to think and emphasise with certain types of killers.” He stared at Rephael, imploring him. “I don't have supernatural gifts. I hunt serial killers. Please, Joe. You have to listen to me before this goes-”

“Perhaps you should gag the witch, Joe?” Rephael snapped. “This one seems to have a lot to say for himself.”

Will stopped talking. The last thing he wanted was to be gagged.

A memory stirs:

Not being able to breathe properly, the feel of the mask crushing him, holding him. Their taunting looks, Chilton's smirking smile. The feeling of being trapped...

He closed his eyes, and looked down.

Rephael smiled. “That's better, witch.” Lunging forward suddenly, he grabbed Will by his neck and pinned him down roughly against the small, makeshift alter. Will struggled for a moment, but actually froze involuntary when he felt the other man's sweaty fingers probing at his entrance. He gasped, shaking his head desperately, as Rephael used one finger, then two, to stretch him, preparing him for what else was to come.

Like a frightening fairytale, Will played over and over in his head what had happened to the the cult's previous victims...

Beaten. Raped. Throat slashed. Heart, eyes and tongue removed.

“My dear friends,” Will heard Rephael say, his voice ringing out over Will's laboured breathing. “May God bless what we must do tonight. If your hearts falter at what you see and hear, remember it is only the demon inside speaking. We will free the trapped Soul.” He reached out and stroked Will's hair. “You will be free tonight.”

Will fought to keep his breathing under control. Will heard the rustle of clothing as Rephael lowered his trousers and lifted up his robes. The stricken profiler than held his breath as the killer pressed up against him. “Please,” he said, as calmly as he could muster. “Don't do this.”

He cried out then as his hair was suddenly grabbed painfully and his head flung back. Will screwed his eyes shut from the sudden pain. He cringed when he felt Rephael's lips against his ear. “Shut your fucking mouth, witch” His head was then thrown forward again. Will knew there was nothing he could do, nothing he could say. Nobody was coming to save him. He tried to prepare himself for what he knew was coming.

But *nothing* could have prepared him for the horror that happened next.

Rephael suddenly pushed forward without even bothering with any further preparation. Both men cried out, Rephael in a mixture of pain and triumph, Will just in his agony. His eyes shot

open as his body was ruthlessly invaded and he cried out in horror, until a hand was quickly clamped over his mouth, smothering his cries.

Will bit down hard on that hand, and wailed his misery. *"NO!"* He then began bucking as hard as he could against Rephael. “Stop!” He had to get out of there. He had to get the killer off of him, out of him. Had to get away, back to Jack, back to safety.

He'd fought so hard, survived so much over the past year. Lecter, his time in prison. This could not be how it would all end for him. Nothing but a sexual plaything for a insane, sadistic psychopath.

He would not die like this.

But Rephael was having none of it.

"You shall be cleansed. You shall be saved." Rephael gritted out coldly, as he continued his punishing thrusts into Will Graham's helpless, broken body.

"This isn't saving!" Will managed to yell, trying to smash his head backwards into his tormentor. Anything to get free. "This is brutal, violent rape! This is a sin and you will go to hell for it.”

“Your lies mean nothing, witch!”

“I'm not a witch, or a demon! I'm just a man. For pity's sake, *Let me go!"* His voice broke hoarsely through his throat, which was tightened in agony.

The loud shouts of the brainwashed people before him abused his ears once again. They were screaming for Rephael to keep going, to “save him” and to cast out the demon slime within him. Responding to their cries, he began thrusting even more deeply into will again and again, each forward movement backed by so much force that Will felt sure the killer drill right through him.

Will had to fight not to cry from the anguish and the indignity of it all. Every means of fighting back against the stronger man, not to mention all of his supporters, had been ripped away from him. He could do nothing now but lay there, accepting his fate.

There was no escaping this.

'Look, Will. Look deep, and see him. Understand him.'

Lecter's low voice filled his head. Will blinked, understanding what his words meant. Perhaps there WAS an escape for him. And his thoughts, or Hannibal, Will finds it so hard to differentiate these days, had just given him the perfect route.

Will stared up at his abuser, the man apparently lost in his bliss, and he controlled his breathing, counted to three, and closed his eyes.

Will looked into the mind of his own rapist.

This way, he could be free of him.

A moment passed. Will was lost in the darkness.

And then, he opened his eyes.

I am Rephael.

I am in control. I am the power.

I can feel him under my hands, his body is writhing, his body belongs to me.

They all belong to me.

As I thrust into him, I am making him pure again. God is happy with the effort I'm making. God will reward me.

They call my name, I feel their worship, their devotion and it empowers me.

He will worship me too before it is done. He will understand. Once I have ripped the evil one from him and he is free.

The witch is in pain. He has surrendered to me. I can hear his breathing but he's not fighting me any more.

He has given in.

I thrust harder. I want to devour him. I will take tongue that lies, his eyes that show the darkness within and his black heart. Only then will he be free.

I am pounding into him now. They are crying my name, screaming their love. I hear and I respond.

This is perfection. This is Heaven on Earth.

I'm touching him now, I want to claim every part of this beautiful creature.

Wait. Something is wrong.

He is feeling this too. He is sharing in my triumph.

The victory is mine, not his.

The witch is using his black magic. He is trying to trick me.

No.

This is wrong.

This is not my design.

Will opened his eyes. It took him two seconds to come to the horrible realisation that not only was he back in his own body, experiencing all those horrific sensations once again, but Raphael had pulled out of Will's body, turned him over, and was now peering down at him, with fire in his eyes. Judging by the look on the psychopath's face, it was very clear that Rephael knew exactly what Will had tried to do.

With sickening clarity, Will understood why Rephael was regarding him with such raging disgust and hatred. The other man believed Will to be some evil demonic creature, and Will had just given him a personal demonstration of the "powers" they had accused Will of having.

Suddenly, "escaping" into his rapist's mind didn't seem such a smart plan after all.

"You think you can escape this, witch?" Rephael snarled to him, tightening his hold on Will's throat. "You think you can escape *me?"*

"I'm not a witch," Will whimpered. "I work with the FBI. I'm a profiler. I don't have powers."

"Be SILENT!" Repheal shouted. "You will have respect for me. I am trying to save you and you use your demonic skills against me? You will be sorry!"

As he listened to Rephael threaten him, it dawned on Will that the room was silent. There were no cheers, or jeers, or cat calls now. No shouts of "amen" or "hallelujah." The followers were watching their leader, waiting for his next move.

A few beats passed. Will and Rephael stared at each other, both breathing loudly. Finally, Rephael smiled.

Will had to swallow down the latest panic attack threatening to consume him.

He waited.

"You wanted to feel the glory of your reclaiming, boy?" He stroked Will's hair. "You wanted to share in God's love for you? I can't blame you for that." His eyes left Will's and he looked out, at his followers. "The witch wanted to revel in the sins of the flesh, my friends. Why should we refuse it it's pleasure?"

They flung their arms in the air and cheered.

Will blinked. He felt sick.

Rephael continued. "I will give you what you seek, witch." His mouth was against Will's lips now. "And everyone here will share in your defeat."

Rolling Will over onto his front once more, Rephael grabbed a handful of Will's hair and forced the man's face down brutally onto the alter, at the same time slamming into Will so hard that he could feel it in the back of his throat, and he choked from the pain of it.

"Praise be to the lord," Rephael slurred into his ear. "For he will strike down the evil in men's hearts and lead us onto the promised land..."

Will cringed, the pain threatening to break him.

He suddenly found himself being stripped of his gown, and them dragged up. Raphael had a bruising grip on the back of his neck, turning, and holding Will against his chest, displaying him for all the watching, baying, followers to enjoy and mock and celebrate as their leader continued to pound into him. There was no shielding himself now, not from their predatory gazes, or the humiliation of what was about to happen. Rephael had defeated him utterly, the killer was inside every part of his being.

It was to only get worse though, as Will felt Rephael take hold of his cock and began to stroke him, in perfect time with his violent thrusts.

A wheeze filtered past Will's constricted throat and he clenched his teeth, tongue pressed to the roof of his mouth, head flung back. God, no, he thought with grotesque clarity. The heat blossomed in rippling waves through his groin and he gasped out a mangled plea to stop as he finally understood what Rephael intended.

He was going to make him cum, like that, in front of them all.

This was total degradation.

Rephael was shushing him softly, laughing gently in his ear. He bit down on Will's earlobe, driving into him relentlessly. Meanwhile, that unforgiving hand continued to pump him, moving him ever closer to the pinnacle of tension and lust. Will pleaded silently with himself to fight against this, to not allow this to happen, but try as he might, he could not hold himself back. He was sickened to realise that he didn't know whether his hips' unbidden movements were trying to pull away from the assault or trying to take up their own thrusting rhythm into Rephael's fist.

He got his answer when his body began to shudder and then eventually shake violently, as though he were in one of his Doctor Lecter induced seizures. His body arched upwards, and his hips were straining...

Oh God...oh, God..!

At the very peak, just as Will felt himself tinkering over the edge, Rephael paused for one torturous moment. The room actually fell silent. Sinking his teeth into the back of Will's neck, actually tearing off some of his flesh and causing him to cry out, Rephael thrust one last time, coating his insides with his “purifying” love, growling out three words as he did so, proving once and for all his overwhelming triumph against the other man. The man that had actually dared to try and escape his judgement:

"You – are – cleansed..."

Everything in Will splintered in Rephael's hands to the tune of an undulating scream. He felt the semen leave his body in a blast, heard the crowd of people cheer widely and he saw, with horrified disgust and shame, that the people closest to the alter were covered in his juices. They were behaving as though he had blessed them, even baptised them, as they, eyes wide and excited, wiped the fluid off of their faces, and licked their fingers clean. Will, utterly

spent emotionally and psychically, fell back, sprawled bonelessly against the chest of his tormentor. He stayed there, unmoving, letting Rephael rub his chest lovingly as he panted, desperately fighting back the tears threatening to spill.

“You are clean now, my son.” Rephael told him, giving Will's head a loving kiss. “Our love has washed the demon's black magic away. Now, I will free you.”

Will didn't react. If Rephael wasn't holding him up, nothing would prevent him from collapsing to the ground.

The cries from the masses continued.

”Set him free! Exorcise the demon! Send him to God!”

There was no fight from Will this time when he was once again shoved down against the make shift alter. He laid there, feeling the blood and semen trickle down his leg, and gasped for breath, finally allowing the tears to slip down his cheeks.

Everything he had gone through, all the sacrifices he had made, had been a waste. The life he had fought so hard to save was about to be ripped away from him in the worst possible way. And he couldn't resist it any more. All he could do was wait and hope that Rephael made it quick.

He thought of Jack and Alana and prayed they didn't blame themselves.

He thought of Hannibal and hoped that he did.

“What does the bible teach us, my friends?” Rephael was saying to his flock, keeping a very tight hold on Will's hair. “What must we do? What did our Lord Jesus Christ say?”

Their cries reached almost a deafening pitch.

“Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live!”

“Again!”

“Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live!”

“Scream it from the hearts, friends! Let God hear us as we rip away the evil from his servant and deliver William Graham into his loving hands!”

They did as they were told, repeating the bible quote, like a mantra:

“Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live. Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live!”

Will sensed another presence moving closer, and was able to move his head slightly to see Joe hand something to Rephael. When Will felt the sharp edge of the blade against his throat, he knew what would happen next.

He let out a low sob, but didn't try to move.

“I spill your blood,” Rephael hissed to him, “And set you free.”

Will closed his eyes, and waited for the blade to end his life.

Will squeezed his eyes up tighter.

Come on. Do it.

He wanted the black.

But it didn't come.

He heard a gasp, and then a gurgling sound.

The grip on his hair weakened.

Unsure, he opened his eyes carefully, and they widened upon the sight before him.

Rephael was still standing above him, gaping down at him with staring eyes. But it was the knife protruding from the mad man's throat that Will couldn't take his eyes off of. The blade had been forced straight through his rapist's flesh, until it was sticking out the other side.

Rephael was manhandled away from Will, and Will was finally able to breath freely.

The stiletto knife was pulled out of Rephael's throat and the man opened his mouth, straining to speak, his head lulling in shock. But of course, no words were uttered.

Will's whole body was shaking, not only from pain now, but also from adrenalin. He watched, awestruck, as the cleaving knife still held weakly in Rephael's right hand was plucked from his fingers and wielded by the killer's attacker.

And that was when Will looked into the eyes off his saviour.

Hannibal Lecter stared back at him, his face expressionless.

“Hello, Will.”

Disbelief hit Will, and he whimpered. He shook his head, refusing to accept that this could be real.

Lecter gazed at him for a few moments more, and then, with a reptilian hiss, thrust the cleaving knife into Rephael's forehead, slicing through the man's brain, and ending his life there and then. He withdrew the knife quickly, and allowed what was left of Will's abuser to fall unceremoniously to the floor. He then turned and looked down at Will, still slumped against the alter.

“You're not here.” Will whispered. “You *can't* be here.”

Hannibal's lips twitched at the broken words.

“Evidently, Will,” he said softly. “I can.”

Will continued to stare at him.

Hannibal averted his eyes from the ex friend he hadn't seen in months, and turned his attention to Raphael's followers, who were all gazing at him, and then at their former leader's crumpled body, then back to Lecter with the utmost terror and confusion.

Doctor Lecter smiled.

“I must apologise,” he told them, in eloquent tones, as he used the black gown he had stolen to sneak in with to clean their leader's blood off of his own knife; “For the interruption.”

He looked calm and collected to any outsider, as he successfully hid the demon inside. Only Will knew differently. Only Will knew what was going to happen next.

“You have all taken something from me, tonight.” Hannibal continued, still speaking as easily as if he were discussing the weather. “Something you had no right to take.”

Hannibal's eyes flashed dangerously.

“What is there to be done about that?”

Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

Thanks for the comments on the last chapter. Hope you enjoy this one too. :)

Nobody moved. Nobody dared make a sound. They all gaped up at Hannibal, completely stunned at what had transpired.

Lecter stood in front of the altar, blocking their view of Will, who was still slumped over the table. He was in so much pain, he wanted to pass out, wanted to give up. But how could he do that now? How could he give in now Lecter was there? He had to watch him, had to *stop* him...

“NO!”

Joe was staring at Hannibal, every part of him shaking from head to toe. He was aiming his custom issued police hand gun at his father's killer, holding it with both his hands to keep it steady, his finger covering the trigger.

“You killed my Pops,” Joe exclaimed, tears streaming down his face. “I trusted you! I did what you asked! And you come here and *butcher* my Daddy?” He was struggling to get the words out, they seemed to catch in his throat. He managed to whimper: “You- you- *monster!*”

Hannibal regarded the young man, not even a flicker of emotion on his handsome features. “A little hypocritical,” he said, simply, a smirk playing on his lips. “Considering.”

Joe let out a roar of fury. “*I'll kill you!”* Seething, he pointed the gun and prepared to fire. He never got the chance though. In the moment he readied himself to pull the trigger, Hannibal struck. Once more wielding the cleaving knife he had used to end his father's life, and with one well timed slash of the knife, the boy's wrist was cut cleanly from his body and fell away, blood pouring from the wound onto the floor. A scream of anguish was torn from the man's lips as he gaped at what remained of his arm in horror. Lecter smirked. Just as he was ready to strike again and finish the job, another man hidden in his black gown attacked Lecter from the opposite side. A few seconds later, he also lay bleeding on the ground, Lecter's stiletto knife slammed hard into his right eye, killing him outright.

A beat passed. Everybody in the room seemed to be in frozen in shock.

Their thoughts were written all over their horrified faces.

Just how did this all go so wrong?

Hannibal looked up slowly, and then threw off the black gown. He straightened his tie, and smiled.

A voice filled the quiet space. “Lets get the hell out of here!”

There was a mad stampede for the door. Each one of them was terrified now, desperate to reach the door and to escape from what had become a horror show.

They each threw themselves against the door, the first few trying to wrench it open – and failing miserably.

“It's stuck!” A woman called.

“Get it open!” A man yelled in response, his fury and fear evident.

“I'm trying!”

No matter what any of them did, the door remained shut.

“I'm afraid,” Lecter told them, toying with the knife in his grasp. “You will find that the door is locked.” He took a step forward. “No one leaves here.”

“God help us!” A voice shrieked.

“God's busy,” Lecter stated.

And then the doctor was leaving Will's side, stepping over the remains of their fallen leader. He didn't spare Rephael's broken corpse another glance.

Hannibal climbed on top of the table that had previously doubled as Rephael's crude altar, glancing down momentarily into Will's pale face. Will looked back, and then closed his eyes, unable to keep them open. Lecter frowned, and then averted his gaze, glaring coldly at the men and women now cowering before him. He gazed down at the faces of the people who had stood by and watched as Will, *his* Will, had been brutalised and wrecked. Their rudeness could not be ignored. He gripped the knives tightly. He needed blood. And he would take theirs.

And then he was jumping down from the pathetic altar, landing in the middle of the gaggle of terrified people. They were no longer the dangerous, obsessed cult they had been ten minutes before, revelling in the torture of the man they had chosen to “save.” In Hannibal Lecter's presence, they were nothing more than sheep about to be herded through the minefield, each one of them already as good as dead, staring at him with wide, terrified eyes.

They were not worth the air they were breathing. To him, they were simply *meat.*

And they would die as such.

He smiled, and raised his blades.

The fools were still standing, awestruck and horrified, apparently rooted to the spot. They had seen their beloved leader butchered right before their eyes, and their little heads were still trying to accept that fact. The seconds it took them to even decide on a course of action cost them the slightest *chance* any of them had in surviving the wrath of the incensed Hannibal Lecter, that they suddenly found themselves up against.

These people were not fighters, Lecter had ensured he killed them first. No, these were unarmed men and women, simple God fearing folk.

None of that mattered to him. They would all pay. All of them.

He made no sound, slashing wildly and without restraint at the men and women that feebly backed away from him, tearing meat from bone like butter. Man or woman, boy or girl, they all fell, one after another. The ground was soon shining crimson red, soaked from their blood. One, a boy no older than fourteen, tried to lunge for Will as he lay helplessly. He obviously planned some ill-advised plan to use Will as a kind of human shield, but before he could manage another step toward the unmoving profiler, Hannibal was upon him. One knife ended up buried in the teenager's stomach, while the other sliced through his chest. The young man made a strange groaning sound as Lecter proceeded to gut him like a fish, finally ending the lad's suffering when he slashed his throat from ear to ear.

Three ran at him then, followed closely by four more, trying to back their enemy against the wall and surround him. But the last thing they wanted to do was to pin Lecter down. His lips curled in amusement as the first man tried to grab for him. Lecter hissed amusedly, and then threw himself at the man, ripping into his throat with his teeth, allowing the blood to spurt everywhere. He didn't stop until the meat grew still. He looked up, knowing they could see the fire in his eyes. They knew that the cannibal they had heard so much about, the monster in the dark, was kneeling before them now, with blood on his lips, and he wasn't satisfied. He wanted *their* blood, wanted *their* lives, and would not rest until every single one of them was lying at his feet, dead, bleeding and utterly destroyed.

Most of them didn't even put up a fight. The adrenaline, instinct and pure *rage* that drove Hannibal was inconceivable to these people. They had believed, so completely, in what Rephael had stood for. They believed that they would be blessed by God for the work they did.

Now, they faced the devil instead.

They screamed, and then were cut down. Their pleas went ignored, their tears abruptly ended with one deft slash of his blades.

He didn't stop, *wouldn't* stop, until they were all beaten, lying dead at his feet.

And then, almost as if he didn't even need to work up a sweat, they were all gone.

Hannibal stood in the centre of the chaos and destruction he had caused, his hair swept over his forehead, his face and clothes covered by the blood of his enemies. He wiped at the red liquid that had splattered onto his cheek, looking down at the stains on his finger. He closed his eyes as he licked his fingers clean, a cold, satisfied smile playing on his lips.

It was the barely audible groan from the man slumped down a few feet away from him that brought Hannibal out of his triumphant, murderous haze. The man whose suffering had prompted this crazed and very uncharacteristic behaviour in him.

The fury and hate were fading, to be replaced with something altogether different and unexpected.

Concern.

Not wanting to scare the younger man, or to cause him any further physical harm if he could help it, Hannibal edged toward him, ensuring that he kept his distance.

He knelt down beside him and, very softly, he breathed one word.

“Will?”

Will whimpered. After a few painful seconds, he managed to lift his head, and his eyes met his Hannibal's.

“Lecter,” he managed, his voice strained and rough. “How did you find me?”

“Later.” Lecter replied, a gentle smile on his lips. “We must leave here now.”

With one more slash of his hand, the ropes binding Will were cut, setting the younger man free.

Hannibal then reached toward Will, who recoiled, groaning softly, raising a hand in a weak attempt to keep Hannibal at bay. Lecter saw that Will was holding a small knife in that hand, one that he had obviously noticed earlier had been left on the ground by it's deceased owner and had taken the opportunity to scoop up. It took real effort for Will to brandish the knife, and Lecter was impressed.

“Stay away from me.” Will gasped.

Lecter paused, hesitant. His eyes were on the blade.

“Tell me, Will.” He asked him, tilting his head slightly. “What do you intend to do with that?”

Will blinked furiously, fighting to keep his focus. He felt so weak, so tired...

And then, he could feel himself falling. He was falling so far and he was going to hit the ground and something slipping from his grasp and hit the ground, and, Oh God, it still hurt, and Lecter was there, and Lecter was going to kill him but it was getting dark and he didn't want to keep his eyes open any more. He wanted to sleep.

As he finally surrendered to that darkness, Will could just pick up on a voice, though the voice sounded so far away. It was a voice from so long ago, before the Cannibal came and ruined Will's life, back when he was simply “Hannibal” the man, not the monster. His friend was calling his name, over and over. And then there were arms around him, holding him

close and he knew he was safe as the inviting blackness consumed him, and finally, thankfully, he knew no more.

Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

> This was going to be short fic, only 4 or 5 chapters long, but I've got a lot more ideas where to take it now...
>
> Also, thanks for the response guys. Especially as you were all too polite to point out I spelt "altar" wrong every single time last chapter ;) If anyone would like to beta this fic, please let me know. I could do with one ;)
>
> Anyway, enjoy...

Lecter was crouched down beside Will, his arms placed tenderly around the younger man's shoulders. If Lecter released him, Will would slip to the floor. The floor covered in the blood of his torturers. Lecter would not allow that to happen. Seeing the black gown they had dressed Will in lying discarded on the side of the altar, Lecter scooped it up, and placed it carefully around Will, trying to keep him warm. He knew he needed to get Will away from there as soon as possible. They were deep in the woods, but it would be daylight soon and this part of the woods was a favourite of the odd early morning hiker, and this place, and Lecter's work, would be discovered. Lecter needed more time with Will, the opportunity to really talk to the other man, and he clearly couldn't do that in their present location.

So, he would have to take Will some place else. Some place safe.

Frowning at the amount of blood seeping across the floor, Hannibal stood up, and then placed his arms under Will, lifting him up, and holding him close. Lecter noticed, to his disappointment, how light Will was. The young man had evidently lost weight. Prison food had obviously not agreed with him, nor was having to “eat on the move” while he and Jack continued their search. Lecter would have to see that put right while he had the opportunity.

Lecter, with his precious baggage, made his way to the Church entrance. He glanced down at his own handiwork as he went, a small, satisfied smile playing on his lips. What a beautiful mess he had made. But still, it didn't seem grand enough, not poetic. If he were honest, this had been an attack fuelled by passion, and his fury had not allowed him the chance to be as artistic as he'd have liked. If he had the opportunity, and the time, he would return to this place before it was found, and leave a very special gift for the police to discover. He would give this night the infamy it deserved. It was no more than these good Christian people had craved, after all.

Their decadent deeds would be honoured in a truly memorable way. He would see to it.

Once he had finally reached the door, and being careful not to drop the prone William Graham tucked up nice and tight in his arms, he retrieved the key from his trouser pocket. With a small smirk, he placed the key in the lock and turned it. With a gentle pull, the door came open easily.

He recalled the meat's desperate, and useless, efforts to force the door open and he allowed himself an amused shake of the head. He did so love to watch them panic. That wonderful moment when they knew there was no chance, that they were *his.* That look of horrified realisation in their eyes. Especially that night, when the strong had become the weak, and they had been pitiful in their surrender. How good it felt to slash, and to cut, and to tear. Their screams and cries had been like a symphony to his ears. A beautiful, brutal symphony. He glanced down at the sleeping Will once more, and he gave him a little knowing smile.

“Sleep, Will.” He muttered, brushing Will's too long curls out of his eyes. “You're safe now.”

“He'll never be safe.”

Lecter looked back sharply, momentarily taken aback. He had not intended to leave any of them alive. This was an inconvenience he could do without.

The weak voice from the far side of the room spoke up again, one word gritted out, with pure hatred:

“*Demon.*”

Lecter tilted his head back slightly. Of course. Joe was still alive.

The son of the deceased leader had, impressively, managed to wrap Lecter's own discarded black gown around the bleeding stump that had once been his wrist, in a desperate attempt to stop the bleeding. He had then dragged himself forward a few feet, his crazed gaze locked on Lecter and Will.

He radiated rage. It was exquisite.

“You led me to the witch. You wanted this to happen, made me trust in you. What game were you playing?”

Lecter raised an eyebrow. “You should rest your arm, Joe.”

Joe actually managed a croak of a laugh. “I will watch you die, demon. I will see you suffer...”

He groaned, the pain overpowering him. He dropped his head, his breath coming out in painful gasps.

His fury and despair were intoxicating to Hannibal. He would like to stay and converse with Joe some more, but he had more pressing concerns. Hugging Will closer to him, he nodded appreciatively to Joe.

“Movement won't help your injury,” he told him, matter of factly. “I want you to live, Joe.”

“Why?”

“I believe that this world is more interesting with you in it.” His expression changed to one of irritation when he saw that Joe wasn't taking his advice. He just kept crawling towards them, his eyes narrowed.

And then, to Hannibal's amusement, he started to preach:

“*Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.*” Joe quoted. “*For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.”*

Lecter didn't respond. He just watched Joe's slow, clearly painful, progress.

“*And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan,*” Joe continued, a grimace as he said spat the name to Lecter. “*The deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.*”

He was again growing weaker. His movement had slowed almost to a stop, and every word spoken from his mouth was nothing but a hoarse whisper, but still Lecter continued to listen to him, his head placed on one side, as the broken young man continued to hiss the carefully chosen bible quotes at him.

If he was honest, Lecter found the whole display very entertaining.

There was something about Joe Naughton. Something he had not foreseen when he had first approached the young man concerning Will.

It would seem that Hannibal had not finished with the boy after all. He would enjoy watching him “dance.”

Joe slumped to the ground with a grunt, managing one more quote, literally spitting the words.

“*For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*”

With a shaky hand, he crossed himself, whispering, “*Amen,*” before collapsing down, utterly exhausted.

Lecter didn't speak for a short while. He just looked.

Then, finally, he cleared his throat.

“You need to keep applying pressure to the wound, Joe. You should elevate your arm too.” He spoke plainly, as if he was dishing out advice to a needy patient. He certainly wasn't at all perturbed that the “patient” clearly saw him as the devil. “It's best to stay laying down, or you may go into shock. If you pass out, you will bleed to death before they have any hope of getting help to you.”

Joe was breathing sharply. Using all he strength he had left, he raised his head slightly, and glared at Lecter. “Kill me. While you still can.”

Lecter smiled. “Unnecessary.”

“I have the Lord on my side.”

Lecter shrugged. “God is deceptive.” He stated. “He works in mysterious ways, does he not? How can you be sure he stands with you?”

Joe grimaced, ignoring the blasphemy. “I promise you this, *Demon,* and I swear on the blood of my family that you have annihilated tonight, if I get out of here, I will find you.” His furious gaze flickered to Will for a moment; “And your little witch.”

Lecter nodded at that. “I'm counting on it.”

Joe had further retort. It was taking every ounce of will power he had left simply to stay conscious.

Lecter saw his struggle, and favoured him with a encouraging smile.

“Goodbye, Joe. I do hope that you live. I will look forward to our next meeting with great anticipation.”

And without giving the boy another glance, Hannibal pulled open the door, and carried Will out. As if he didn't have a care in the world, Hannibal walked down the pathway leading from the converted barn, a smug smile playing on his lips. They soon entered the near by woodlands, Hannibal walking confidently despite the darkness. He knew exactly where he was going. Sure enough, only a few meters away, a car was parked up. Hannibal reached the vehicle quickly, laying Will down on the muddy ground for a moment, as he pulled the door open. He lift Will once more, pushing him onto the back seat, watching contently as Will curled up into a foetal position, his legs tucked into his chest. Lecter covered him with a blanket that he had taken from the front passenger seat, and then leaned forward, stroking Will's hair tenderly.

He noticed the blood stains seeping through the black gown Will was wearing, and frowned. The man needed urgent attention, or there was a danger of him not making a full recovery from his ordeal. Well, physically. Lecter was pretty certain Will would never be the same mentally or emotionally. Who knew, perhaps this would even be the final act to push him over that edge he clung so desperately too? Hannibal felt a small thrill at the thought.

Finally, Will would realise his potential. And Hannibal's work would be over. He would be able to sit back and watch the rewards...

He moved away from the sleeping Will regretfully, backing out of the car, and pushing the door to, shutting Will in. He then walked quickly around to the front, pulling open the drivers door and slipping into the front seat. He glanced over his shoulder at Will and saw how peaceful the man looked.

Hannibal was genuinely pleased that Will was back with him. As it should be.

He couldn't help but smile with some satisfaction.

He turned the key, and the car roared into life.

Everything was going according to plan.

XXX

In the church, the sound of laboured breathing broke the deathly silence. Joe lay where Hannibal had dismissed him, although he had been smart enough to take the good doctor's advice.

He had rolled the gown more tightly around his bloody stump, and was applying pressure, fighting to hold off the sleep that was trying to over power him. He must stay awake, he knew that much. Lecter's advise had been, strangely, helpful. If he passed out, he would be finished. All he could pray was that he would be found in time or that Hannibal would return and either aid him, if he truly wanted him to live, or finish him. Either option seemed attractive to Joe in that moment. He couldn't bear the suffering, he just wanted the pain gone.

The pain was lessening. His vision was turning fuzzy, the world dimming.

The blackness was so welcoming now. The peace he would find inside of it...

Joe gave himself a small shake. *No.* That was not what his father would have wanted. How could he give up now? He was the last of the Church of Saviours, the only one who could finish the job that his family had began. The witch had to die, and die he would, at his hand.

Will Graham would be set free.

Let the blood run so that the soul may fly free.

As he sent a silent prayer up to his God to keep him alive, so that he could get vengeance on the men that had destroyed everything he held dear.

Glancing down, he saw his father's bloody and broken form, and he felt a tightness in his chest. That's how he knew he was still alive, still fighting. His grief. It took over everything else.

Seeing a flash of silver, Joe grunted, and extended his arm. He had noticed the crucifix hanging around his dad's neck, and he tried to take it, groaning in intense pain when he couldn't quite reach it. He knew how much that cross had meant to his old man, it had been passed down through their family's generations and Joe would be damned if that tradition stopped there and then. Literally crying out from the effort, Joe finally pulled the little pendant free, using what was left of his strength, and held it in the palm of his hand. He eyed it for a few moments, memories of his family causing his eyes to well up.

He wiped at them in fury. *No.* That would not do.

Joe gritted his teeth. He would not cry. Crying was for the weak.

He would avenge those taken from him. For them, he could not cry.

For the father he loved, he would be strong. He would do him proud.

He would find the Demon and the witch, and he would make them pay.

He would make them *die.*

Chapter 6

Chapter Notes

Sorry for the slow update. This was a tough chapter. Enjoy. Comments are nice! :)

Will awoke with a startled cry, his eyes snapping open. He was breathing heavily, staring up at the wooden ceiling above him. His whole body was aching, but he didn't seem to be in too much pain. He struggled to remember where he was, and what he was doing there. He rubbed at his eyes, looking down at the blanket pulled up tightly to his neck. So, he was tucked up in bed. But where? He glanced to his left, noting the small table beside his bed. Was he back in his motel room? No. This wasn't his room. This wasn't that church either. He was somewhere new.

The church...

Like a slideshow in his mind, it all came flooding back to him. Horror after horror, he saw it all. And he remembered.

Joe had knocked him out. Taken him.

All those people. Screaming and shouting, wanting him harmed.

Rephael smiling down at him.

The fear. The terror.

"Witch!"

The rape. The pain as he had thrusted into him. The feeling of helplessness and shame. The humiliation as his body was used against him.

The sharpness of the knife against his throat...

And then... Oh God...

He had come for him. He'd killed them all.

Lecter.

With a horrified sob, Will sat bolt upright and he was suddenly hit with waves of agony. He cried out, the pain too much for him to cope with. He lay back down, whimpering, waiting for the agony to subside.

Just as he felt it beginning to ease off, he suddenly realised that he was not alone. Someone was watching.

He was there.

“You need to rest.”

The hated voice came out of the darkness, surrounding him, and Will let out a low gasp, leaning back against the wall. He watched, horror-struck as Lecter walked out of shadows. Will was just able to make out his satisfied smile as he crossed to the window, and pulled open the blinds. The morning light lit up the room, and Will whimpered, protecting his eyes. Hannibal moved closer, only to pause when Will edged his way even further into the wall. “I gave you a small dose of morphine to relieve the pain.” Hannibal told him, keeping his distance, much to Will's relief. “You will feel light-headed and nauseous for a short while, so no sudden movements.” He tilted his head slightly. “You will be okay.”

Will managed a humourless smile at that. “I'd hoped it had all been a sick nightmare.” He croaked, staring up at the ceiling. “Especially the part where you appeared.”

Lecter's tone was suddenly more clipped. “I saved you, Will.”

Will shrugged.

“Did you?” Another cold smile. “Where am I?"

"In a motel room. Just on the outskirts of town."

"How long have I been here?”

“Four hours. It’s five am.”

Will blinked. “Jack will find out I’m missing soon. He’ll be looking for me-“

A smirk crept across Hannibal’s face. “As we both know, Jack has a tendency to miss what is right under his nose.”

Will bristled at the slight against his friend, but didn’t push the point. He changed tack.

“How did you know where to find me?” He swallowed down his fear. “Don't tell me that you smelt me.”

Hannibal smiled. “I have been in this town for a few days.” He replied. “In fact, I arrived before you did.”

Will shivered.

'He’d been right.'

He had sensed Lecter's presence from the second he walked into that damned town.

'He wished he'd had the sense to walk away...'

"I've been watching you and Jack for some time. I've been very interested in your efforts and ideas to track me down." There was unmistakable pride in his tone. Hearing it chilled Will to his core. "Some of your theories to my whereabouts and actions have been very imaginative, Will. I've been most impressed."

Will's smile was more of a grimace. "Your little toy hasn't quite run out of batteries yet."

Lecter didn't respond.

Will looked away.

He was very aware that Hannibal would be finding his behaviour rude and was obviously overlooking it. Biting on his lip, Will asked. "Why didn't you leave when you saw us? I assume you didn't want to be caught?"

"Not at all." Lecter offered. He lowered his voice. "But I did want to see you."

Will couldn't help himself. He actually started to laugh. Eventually, the grim laugh turned into painful hacking coughs. Lecter was suddenly by Will's side, taking hold of his arm, and handing him a glass of water.

At long last, Will's eyes met Lecter's.

The gazed at each other. As ever, Lecter's expression was unreadable. Will knew he would be an open book to the doctor and he didn't give a damn. He was thinking back to that church, and to what the boy Joe had yelled at Hannibal, just before all Hell had broken loose.

His words played over and over in Will's mind. And they were loud and clear.

"I trusted you! I did what you asked!"

Will could feel the rage building up inside him again. The darkness that threatened to consume him, if he were to give into it. And, right at that moment, how he wanted to.

"You knew him."

Lecter said nothing.

Will's anger increased. "You told him about me, didn't you? Led them right to me? You let them think that I was a witch, and that's why they chose to "cleanse" me. Because you handed me to them on a plate." He was shaking. "You twisted sonovabitch!"

Hannibal didn't budge.

"Will, I must ask you again to calm down. You have been through an ordeal-"

Will laughed bitterly again, as he attempted to sit up. "You're damned right!"

“I suggest you listen to me,” Hannibal told him. “If you attempt to move, you will only fall down again.”

Will didn't care.

“Why?” Will snapped, ignoring his doctor's words. “Why did you do it?”

Lecter actually had the good grace to look slightly unsure. He even fiddled momentarily with his tie. “I needed to get you alone, away from Jack. I wanted to talk to you.”

Will shook his head, disbelieving.

‘He wanted to talk?’

As he waited for that revelation to sink in, Hannibal paused, before adding: “And I wanted to see how you would react.”

Will froze. Turning his head, he finally met Hannibal's gaze.

There was a pause.

Finally, Will returned, “React to what?”

Hannibal didn't reply. He didn't need to. The unspoken truth was obvious.

Will's bottom lip trembled as he digested Lecter's words, and their meaning.

He was back there, in that church. Rephael was behind him, *inside* him. Contaminating him to his very core…

He was being pinned, he couldn't move. Rephael had hold of him so tightly, grunting in pleasure with every brutal thrust. Every movement by the crazed man was tearing him apart. Rephael was destroying him, and there was nothing Will could do about it. He was helpless...

This is how he was going to die… defiled and thrown away…

And then, he was back. And Lecter was watching him closely. Will closed his eyes, bringing his breathing back under control. He had to push aside the memories of his rape for now. He couldn’t deal with that too. That was for another day. For now, all his attention had to be focused on the monster in the present, not in the past…

“You wanted to see how I'd react to being raped.” He muttered. That rage was only building. He wanted to hit out, to hurt, to *kill*. But his body wouldn’t obey. Instead, he asked: “How long were you there for before you bothered to show yourself?”

Hannibal's lips twitched. “I had to wait for the perfect moment, Will.”

Will wasn't listening. He was glaring at Hannibal with horrified realisation.

“You *watched* him rape me.” It was a statement, not a question.

Lecter frowned. Before he had the chance to speak, Will tore into him. “You stood there, out of sight, watching as they humiliated me.” He was trembling. “Did you enjoy it? Did you get aroused watching him sticking his prick into me?” Will was fighting back tears he refused to allow to spill. *“Answer me!”*

Lecter shifted, showing an uncharacteristic sign of uncertainty. “I didn't have the opportunity to-

“Did you enjoy it?”

“No.” Lecter answered. “I did not.” His lips twitched. “As I hope my response to their actions proved.

The younger man took a few deep breaths, composing himself, before adding: “Don't you lie to me.”

There was a beat as they gazed at each other.

“I promise you, Will.” Lecter’s tone was steady. “If I had acted sooner, Joe would have easily slit your throat with his knife, the knife he eventually handed to his father, before I could even get to you.” He blinked. “I'm sorry I couldn't prevent what they did to you.”

Will was staring up at him. He had listened as Hannibal had spoken, chewing on his lower lip. Once the older man had finished, he whispered, his hands balled into fists as his side. “Just this once, Doctor Lecter, could you please not fucking lie to me?!”

Lecter grimaced at the coarse language.

He held up a hand, in an effort to contain Will's anger.

“Calm down, Will.”

But the softly spoken instruction only proved to incense Will all the more.

He couldn't deal with this any longer. He *wouldn't.* He would not be manipulated by this demon again. Those people back at the church, with the exception of Rephael and Joe, all those dead people; they may have been brainwashed into committing a vile act. They had been twisted in their desire to do right.

But Hannibal Lecter was on another level of evil to them.

This time, Will would stop him.

Hissing furiously, he lunged toward Hannibal, scratching red lines down the side of his face, digging into his flesh like a terrified, trapped animal. Hannibal recoiled slightly in surprise at the unexpected attack. Seeing his small opportunity, Will rolled over onto his side, grunting in agony when his body shouted its outrage at the sudden movement. Ignoring the pain, Will groped for the table beside his bed, saw the discarded glass sitting atop it, and grabbed for it. Hannibal wiped at the blood on his cheek, glaring at Will. With a cry of effort, the younger man smashed the glass against the table, leaving a sharp edge. He then attempted to stab at

Hannibal, but Lecter saw the blow coming. With an impatient frown, he grabbed at it, ripping the impromptu weapon free from Will's grasp. Will continued his attack regardless, trying to grab for the glass once more, until Lecter had him pinned helplessly beneath him. The weapon, and Will's only chance of escape, was safely out of Will's reach.

Will cried out, trying to kick out at his captor, desperate to get him away.

“Get off me! Get OFF!”

“You must stop, Will. You need to rest after-”

Will was not listening. He continued to struggle weakly against Lecter, hitting out at him, but he was so lethargic from the drugs, not one punch had any effect.

Will was already tiring as he spat insults to the man that had ruined his life.

“You let them take me. You let him *rape me.* You bastard. You let them-”

Lecter, holding Will's wrists tightly, let him shout and writhe, allowing him to tire himself out.

Will eventually grew still, stared up at him, his breathing now laboured sobs. He was fighting back tears as he looked into the eyes of the monster he had once been naïve enough to call “friend.”

“Why did you do that to me? Why did you do *any* of it?”

Lecter searched his face. Will glared back, waiting for his answer.

“To make you *see.*”

Will blinked.

“What does that mean?”

Hannibal finally glanced down, and walked around the side of the bed, until he was standing directly beside Will.

Will stared up him, his insides churning.

Hannibal gave him a small, nervous smile.

“I want you to come with me.”

Will's eyes widened. That was not what he had been expecting.

Maybe he'd heard wrong?

“What?”

Hannibal took a step forward, his shoes now touching the bottom of the bed. “Come with me, Will. I want you to become the person you were born to be. You have buried your true nature as deeply as you can and I believe I can help you find it again.” He paused, as if searching for the best words. “I want you to leave this place and come away with me.” He extended his arm toward Will, who instantly recoiled, so Hannibal stopped. “Let us find the answers together.”

Will gaped up at him for a few moments. Then suddenly, inexplicably, considering his situation, he burst out laughing.

Hannibal stood perfectly still, waiting for Will's hysterical reaction to cease.

Finally, Will grew silent. Shaking, he covered his face with his hands.

He replied, with a sigh: “If you think I'd go anywhere with you by choice, you're even more insane than I thought.” Will lowered his hands, and eyed Hannibal with disdain. “If that's actually even possible.”

Hannibal ignored him. “If only you could see what I see when I look at you, Will. You have no idea how special, how *beautiful*, you truly are.” He reached down and picked up the broken glass Will had tried to attack him with. He toyed with it, slicing the top of his forefinger, drawing blood. He stared down at crimson liquid, and then placed his finger in his mouth and licked. His eyes then met Will's once more. “You are afraid of what you don't understand. Of what is inside of you. You have nothing to be frightened or ashamed of, Will. There is so much more to you than what they, what *Jack,* have turned you into.”

“Stop it,” Will snapped.

“You are scared to give in to your true self, Will.” He pressed. “You and I, my friend. We are the same.”

Before Hannibal could stop him, Will grabbed at the broken glass, and with all his remaining strength, he lobbed it at Hannibal, who ducked. The glass hit the far wall, where it shattered into a million pieces.

“Don't you ever say that to me! I'm *nothing* like you! I'm *not* insane!”

Hannibal stared at the wall for a few moments, then down at the shards of glass lying on the carpet, and then turned back to Will, his face passive.

“That was rude, Will. I must confess I find myself disappointed.”

Will let out a cold chuckle, closing his eyes. “You can't make me do what you want, Lecter. Not anymore. You can't make me leave this place with you willingly. There's nothing more you can do to me.”

Lecter's eyes narrowed as he regarded the stubborn younger man.

“There's always something else I can do, William.”

Will glowered at him. “Fine. Go ahead. Do what you do best, you sick bastard, and kill me. Like Beverly and Abigail. Finish it!”

Something flickered across Lecter's face. It was only there for a moment, but Will saw it. Anger Pure, unadulterated fury. He'd gotten to him at last. Finally, Will had something he could work with.

Hannibal tilted his head slightly, clearly attempting to keep his anger in check. “You're being very foolish, Will. Quite unbecoming of you. I will not abide rudeness, not even from you. I would have hoped you'd have done me the courtesy of remembering that.”

“Don't come near me then.” Will retorted.

Lecter sighed, and then reached out, firmly taking hold of Will's chin, forcing him to look at him.

“I want you listen to me, Will. You are not making this easy.”

Will was disgusted. Did Lecter expect him to go quietly? Fuck that. He began to thrash about, trying to force his body to move, desperate to get Hannibal away from him. Unfortunately, he was still too weak, too beaten, and Lecter was easily able to restrain him.

Holding Will down by his shoulders, Hannibal again attempted to calm the younger man.

“You need to stop these pointless tantrums, Will.”

“Go to hell.”

Hannibal frowned. “The only person you are hurting is yourself.”

Will stared up at him with wide eyes. How did he have the *audacity?*

Then, rage seized him once more.

Against his better judgement, and sickened by Lecter's close proximity to him, Will did the only thing he could think of to force him away.

He spat on him, hitting him square on his cheek.

Silence fell.

Hannibal eyed Will for a moment, who gazed back, breathing hard. Hannibal then wiped at the flem on his cheek. With a smirk playing on his lips, he then licked at his fingers, keeping eye contact with Will as he did so.

“I hate you.” Will whispered. “Just the sound of your name makes me want to vomit, doctor.”

Hannibal's eyes narrowed. His lips twitched.

With a growl, he once again pinned Will down to the mattress, though this time he wasn't so concerned about not hurting the younger man. He straddled Will, almost crushing him with his weight. He leaned down onto him, his teeth bared, as if he planned to bite him.

Will closed his eyes, waiting for the doctor to tear out his throat.

He was stunned when he felt cold lips pressing gently against his own. His eyes sprang open, and he gaped.

After a few seconds, Hannibal drew back. He regarded Will closely, a tiny smile playing on his lips.

Will, meanwhile, was trembling. It was a real battle for him not to lose control completely. He was repulsed. This was just another violation, to go with everything he had suffered that night. He stared up at Lecter with hatred.

“I'm nothing like you.” He repeated, softly. “And I never will be.”

“Come with me, Will.”

“Never.”

Hannibal stared at him. Will stared back, unblinking, controlling his breathing.

Finally, Lecter seemed to give in.

He gave Will a sad, resigned smile.

“I accept that this was too soon. I hoped you would feel some gratitude for what I risked for you tonight. I see I gave you too much credit.”

Will couldn’t actually form words. He stared up at Hannibal, not quite believing the man had the nerve.

“Jack’s influence on you is clear to see.” He bowed his head sadly. “There is nothing more to say here today. You will have to discover the answers on your own, I’m afraid.” His eyes bored into Will’s. “When you do, I’ll be waiting.”

As Will watched, Hannibal placed his hand inside his jacket, and pulled out a small box. He opened it carefully, to reveal a set of syringes. He lifted one up, looked at it, and then smiled back down at Will.

“What is that?” Will eyed it with dread. “More morphine? Is it safe?”

“I'm sorry I couldn't convince you, Will...”

Panic seized Will. He tried to pull away, but he had nowhere to go.

“Doctor Lecter, please… wait...”

Hannibal raised an eyebrow. “Some respect at last, William? We are finally getting somewhere...” He smiled. “I assure you I am always very careful with your doses. You will sleep, and then, once you have recovered, you will be fine.”

He leaned forward quickly, injecting the drug into Will's arm. Within seconds, the younger man could feel that wonderful *nothingness* descending to claim him once more. He knew he should fight it, that he should fight Lecter, but that desire to give in was just too strong.

He needed to close his eyes. The sleep would do him good...

Lecter stroked Will's hair, watching as he slipped into unconsciousness once more.

“I must leave you now, my dear. There is something I need to attend to.” There was regret in his tone as he whispered: “Goodbye, Will.”

Will couldn't resist the pull of that darkness. As he allowed himself to fall into the blessed blackness, the last thing he heard was Lecter's quiet voice, already so far away, calling to him...

“Until the next time, my friend.”

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